

**Meeting Minutes of
The Governor's Council on Behavioral Health
1:00 P.M., Tuesday, September 12, 2006**

The Governor's Council on Behavioral Health met at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 12, 2006, in Barry Hall's Conference Room 126, 14 Harrington Road, Cranston, Rhode Island.

Members Present: Richard Leclerc, Chair; Scotti DiDonato; Sandra Del Sesto; Chaz Gross; Mitch Henderson; Joseph Le; Peter Mendoza; Marjorie Rekowski; Neil Corkery; and Heather Fish.

Ex-Officio Craig Stenning and Gene Nadeau, MHRH; Jeanne Smith and Sandy Woods,
Members Present: DCYF; Fred Friedman, DOC; Michele Palermo, Department of Education
Services

Staff: Charles Williams, Kristen Quinlan, and Mary Ann Nassa.

Guests: Jill Beckwith, Rhode Island Kids Count; Jen McCarthy, NAMI of RI; and Nick Long.

Once a quorum was established, the Chair called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. The Chair entertained a motion to ratify the Minutes of June 13, 2006. Joseph Le motioned to ratify the minutes of June and Scotti DiDonato seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the Minutes of June 13 were ratified.

The Chair then entertained a motion to accept the Minutes of July 13, 2006. Fred Friedman noted that under **Old/New Business** it should read that the Roger Williams settlement money "might be used," not will be. They are still working towards this possibility. Peter Mendoza motioned to accept the minutes as amended and Sandra Del Sesto seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the minutes were approved as amended.

MENTAL HEALTH BLOCK GRANT

Charles Williams reported that the Mental Health Block Grant was submitted on time to SAMHSA and was posted on SAMHSA's website where it can be viewed. Richard Leclerc asked if there were any notable changes. Charles stated that he did not recall any.

Richard Leclerc entertained a motion to ratify his actions regarding the *letter sent to Louellen M. Rice, Grants Management Officer, at SAMHSA (See Attachment I)* notifying SAMHSA that the Governor's Council on Mental Health was given the opportunity to review all sections of the 2007 Block Grant Application. Neil Corkery moved to accept ratification of the letter to Louellen M. Rice and Peter Mendoza seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motioned was carried.

Richard announced that the Substance Abuse Block Grant is due to be submitted by the end of September. Richard stated that although the Council's role for the Substance Abuse Block Grant is different than the Mental Health Block Grant, the Council is usually informed regarding the content of that document when submitted.

UPDATES FROM MHRH

Craig Stenning reported receiving the official notification from the Federal Government approving the request for the SIG sixth-year extension through May 31, 2007. Craig stated that this indicates the full three-year implementation of all the community prevention programs.

Craig reported receiving a copy of the Core Review that had previously been done. He stated that there is a two-week period to respond to it.

Craig reported that the Talbot Short-Term Residential also known as the Plain Street Program and is operated by The Providence Center has moved to the Manual Mathias wing of the Eleanor Slater Hospital. Craig stated that there were some glitches in the move in relationship to the proximity of the Girls' Training School to the program. A majority of those glitches have been worked out, but he is waiting to hear back from the training school regarding the use of some common areas. He stated that their goals are to maintain dignity, as well as confidentiality of the individuals who are in The Providence Center program, but are also understanding of the concerns of the individuals who have been operating the Girls' Training School.

Craig announced that the Director is actively trying to convey to individuals at the State House and to others in the community about the complex nature of this campus and to regain the planning of the buildings currently being occupied. Craig stated that they are working on some ideas to look at how the Welcome Arnold Program, which is the homeless shelter at the end of Howard Avenue, can be relocated if the State Police Barracks goes in.

Neil Corkery commended Director Nelson regarding her support of the field and The Providence Center during The Plain Street Program incident.

Craig announced that September is National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month and over the past five years MHRH has sponsored a major event in its honor and on Saturday, September 16, from 4 to 7 p.m. at the corner of Steeple Street and Canal Street in Providence "The Journey of Recovery" has been planned and the celebration will include a Providence WaterFire display. It will also include live entertainment along with some demonstrations of recovery, but the overall theme is a two-part theme which is the celebration of recovery as well as recognition of those individuals who have died from addiction. There will be a candlelight vigil to recognize those working toward recovery and to remember those who have died from addiction. There will be several state level speakers including Jane Hayward, Representative Costantino, and the Governor who may be there. Craig asked that everyone help to spread the word within the field about this event. Craig distributed copies of the informational flyer to the Council.

Craig reported that the 2007 budget contained two major proposals. The first being the implementation of the combined RFP for inpatient psychiatric services and substance abuse detoxification services. The implementation date of that contract has been pushed back from October 1 to January 1 at the request of several individuals in the community. Craig reported that the draft is going to the Division of Purchasing this week. He also reported that the other major project is the implementation of Rhode Island Assertive Community Treatment II (RIAct II), which is the mobile treatment team (MTT) concept in Rhode Island. Rhode Island is the first state in the country to have the RIAct II level. Craig stated that the regulations will be

promulgated on an emergency basis either on Friday, September 15 or Monday, September 18. There will then be a routine promulgation which has a 30 day capping period with an implementation date set for October 1, 2006. The plan has been submitted to DHS and a verbal agreement has been received.

Craig announced that he was notified by the court system that not only is the funding for the Adult Drug Court being eliminated, which was supposed to be effective August 15, but now it will be eliminated effective July 1. Craig stated that this situation of notice two months after the fact has created \$30,000 worth of bills that the court will not support. Craig acknowledged what a great program this has been and that another course of action needs to be taken. He stated that they are going to continue the court, but it will only be for individuals who have Medicaid or private insurance. Craig reported that a letter was sent to providers stating that effective by a certain date not to admit new people under that funding. Craig stated that a position occupied by David Lema will no longer be funded through those dollars, and Craig is working on keeping David on, but he may not be in the same position.

Craig also announced that preparation for the 2008 budget is another issue under consideration at this time.

UPDATES ON STRATEGIC PLAN

Kristen Quinlan reviewed the 15-page document attached with the Minutes of July 13, 2003, ***Behavioral Healthcare Services Planning: A Starting Point***, which outlines the Strategic Plan's current status. The document lists the four most recent previous plans and their dates of dissemination and the goals set forth in those previous plans. Kristen explained that the current report seeks to create a baseline for a unified behavioral healthcare strategic plan. The report will provide a current picture of planning as measured by the extent to which recommendations from the State's four previous mental health and substance abuse plans have been incorporated into the Divisions activities. Kristin reviewed the four previous plans. To the four plans she added recommendations from the ***State Incentive Grant Plan*** and recommendations from the ***Rhode Island Substance Abuse Treatment Needs Assessment***. Finally, she discussed the summary, ***Recommendations Needed Additional Attention***, indicating where they still need to go in terms of all four plans by looking at all the recommendations across all four plans, and determining which ones could use additional study.

Kristen stated that a site visit has been scheduled for September 21st with The Rhode Island Foundation who may provide a portion of funding for some of the costs associated with the Strategic Plan.

Neil Corkery asked where the Quality Assessment initiative fits in. Charles Williams stated that the Department's overall Quality Assessment is going on and this will be the ongoing Behavioral Health Plan part of it, and therefore it will be folded into the overall Quality Assessment. Richard Leclerc added that his understanding is that although there may be some overlap, this plan is a much more strategic and visionary whereas the Quality Assessment initiative is more operational.

Richard Leclerc also stated that the proposal to the Rhode Island Foundation would help to provide staffing and create a more community-based collaborative process to combine all of the plans and update and add the elements that are missing, as well as develop some strategies to achieve all of those goals. Charles Williams added that it would also provide some support for collecting epidemiological data and assessing needs in the community.

Kristin stated that if there are any questions when reading through the plan that her contact information is printed at the bottom of Page 1 of the Plan.

UPDATES ON CO-OCCURRING ACTION PLAN

Charles Williams recalled that in 2005 a number of individuals attended a Co-Occurring Policy Academy sponsored by SAMHSA and its Center for Mental Health Services. Rhode Island was one of the state's that applied and was accepted and began work on a plan for addressing, in a systematic way, the system of services for co-occurring disorders in Rhode Island. Over the months following the Policy Academy, a plan was developed and submitted to SAMHSA last December. Once it was approved by SAMHSA, there were several changes in managers and implementers and essentially everyone who participated in the original Policy Academy meeting were no longer involved. There were some technical assistance telephone calls with coordinators from the Center for Co-Occurring Excellence; and based on those discussions and along with the project officer at the Center for Mental Health Services, they have reconstituted a team comprised of representatives from six state departments including MHRH, DCYF, Department of Elderly Affairs, Human Services, Corrections and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, and ten community organizations, associations and advocacy groups. Charles reported that a mini Policy Academy is scheduled for September 28 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Casey Family Services.

Charles stated that the most recent version of the **RI State Action Plan for an Integrated COD System of Care – Revision 2** was included as *Attachment II with the Minutes of July 13, 2006*.

Richard Leclerc asked if the plan has a specific timeframe. Charles stated that there are completion dates for each of the end steps which go out to December of 2008, allowing time for planning, development of strategies, and some budget items needing time to get ahead of the budget cycle.

Mitch Henderson stated that it is very difficult for lay people to follow and understand what the items are within the categories because of acronyms. Charles stated that he will have a list of acronyms available for the next Council meeting.

UPDATES FROM DCYF

Jeanne Smith reported that she worked on the children's portion of the Mental Health Block Grant along with Corinna Roy. She stated that if there were any questions or feedback regarding the Children's Plan, to feel free to email them to her at Jeanne.Smith@dcyf.ri.gov

Jeanne stated that she will be coordinating next year's block grant and will be attending the Governor's Council meetings regularly. Jeanne stated that she has been working for DCYF for about four years and is a social worker in the position of Professional Services Coordinator serving as the Psychiatric Hospital Liaison.

Jeanne reported that the Department is ready to implement the Positive Educational Partnership (PEP) Initiative Grant which begins October 1, and there are about sixteen schools involved that are ready to start October 1.

Jeanne also reported that there are two initiatives right now at DCYF both of which are targeting youth in transition. One of them is the Partnership of Youth in Transition. Jeanne

reported that DCYF has completed a policy gap survey and they are ready to submit a report to the Children's Cabinet on October 1. Jeanne stated that next year's work plan will be discussed at the next meeting which is September 20.

Additionally, Jeanne stated that the other workgroup that is going on in terms of the initiative is the Transition to Independent Living, which is chaired by the Director, Patricia Martinez. Jeanne reported that Director Martinez is specifically trying to focus on how to incorporate housing dollars, the Department of Labor, and DCYF dollars in order to prepare youth for independent living. Jeanne stated that the group meets monthly both internally and within the community. They are now looking at national models.

Jeanne announced that DCYF is very excited that the children in the foster care arena will be converted to the White Smiles Program which is a DHS dental program targeting all publicly funded children. DCYF plans to convert all children who are publicly funded into that program starting October 1.

Richard Leclerc asked if Jeanne had any information on the night-to-night placements in the state. Jeanne stated that she does not have any information on that issue, but will bring that information to the next Council meeting. Sandy Woods added that it has improved and that it is not quite as extreme that it used to be.

Sandy Woods expressed that DCYF is experiencing a capacity issue for adults who are seeking substance abuse treatment. When DCYF case workers try to access treatment services, they are being told, depending on the location in the state, that the waiting lists are three to four months long for state funded services. Sandy also stated that there are agencies that are either shutting down their waiting lists or not accepting names for referrals no matter who the payer is. Sandy reported that on a yearly basis about one-third of the DCYF kids are removed from their homes because of the parent's substance abuse. DCYF workers are required to access these services as part of the parent's case plan, and the parents are required to successfully complete substance abuse treatment in order to be unified with their children. Therefore, it is a need for all kinds of reasons. Sandy also referred to a Federal Statute requiring that once children are removed from the home, the clock starts ticking, and DCYF and the parents and the court, have 12 months in which parents have to do what they need to do in order to provide a safe home for their kids. At the end of those 12 months, DCYF is required by Federal Statute to make a permanency decision which in many cases is filing a termination of parental rights. With a three or four month waiting period to access services, which may be one of many problems that the family may be experiencing, along with a 12-month period to get this all completed, this can be problematic.

Richard Leclerc asked if this response was for all levels of care. Sandy stated that it was at all levels, but especially the state funded outpatient substance abuse.

Richard stated he would look into the situation and get back with information for the next meeting. Neil Corkery stated that he would also raise the issue with the providers that he works with.

Richard stated that he will request a report on utilization and access on a statewide basis from the meetings being held between the regional grants recipients and MHRH, because, as indicated, there may be regional differences in terms of access.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Richard announced the submission of notice through an ad that was placed in the Providence Journal about one or two months ago looking for individuals who might be interested in joining the Governor's Council. At that point in time there were five (5) vacancies. Richard reported that they have received the names of 12 interested individuals and that five of those names have been submitted to Governor. Richard reminded Council members that it is the Governor's prerogative to appoint individuals to this Council, and that the Governor has been doing that from his own list. Richard stated that they were not sure if that was going to continue, because of the certain qualifications necessary to serve -- such as being family members, consumers and establishing a blend of diversity on the Council. Richard reported that the list has been submitted and that the Governor is considering it. Richard further stated that he is anticipating that there maybe a few more vacancies. He also stated that he will keep an ongoing list of interested individuals, but if anyone knows of someone who would like to serve on the Council, to please let him know so they can be added to the list.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

There was no further business. Upon motion made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 2 p.m. The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for **Thursday, October 12, at 8:30 a.m. in the first floor Conference Room 126 at the Barry Hall Building.**

Minutes respectfully recorded and written by:

Mary Ann Nassa
Secretary, Governor's Council on Behavioral Health

Attachment I: Letter sent to Louellen M. Rice, Grants Management Officer, at SAMHSA